

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO /SECSTATE WASHDC 1028
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AMEMBASSY OSLO
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C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 0382

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, FI
SUBJECT: FINNISH COMMUNIST PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE HOLDS FIRST
MEETING OF 1977

REF: HELSINKI 76 A-132

1. SUMMARY: FINNISH COMMUNIST PARTY (SKP) PROCLAIMS NEW
UNITY, CONDEMNS CENTER/RIGHT COOPERATION ON DOMESTIC AND
FOREIGN POLICY GROUNDS AND CALLS FOR CENTER/LEFT UNITY,
WHILE AT SAME TIME CALLING FOR RADICAL PROGRAMS WHICH
NEITHER SOCIAL DEMOCRATS NOR CENTER GROUPS LIKELY BE
ABLE TO SUPPORT. END SUMMARY
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2. ACCORDING TO PARTY STATEMENTS AND COMMUNIST PRESS,
SKP CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING FEB 18-19 WAS MARKED BY
HARMONY BETWEEN MODERATE MAJORITY AND HARDLINE MINORITY
WINGS. SKP CENTRAL COMMITTEE'S FIRST MEETING OF 1977
PRODUCED UNANIMOUS DECLARATION THAT "NEW PREMISES FOR
UNITED COMMUNIST ACTION HAVE BEEN BORN." DECLARATION
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NOTES THAT COMMITTEE'S NOVEMBER DOCUMENT "A DEMOCRATIC
ROAD OUT FROM THE CRISIS" (REFAIR) HAS BEEN POSITIVELY
RECEIVED IN PARTY AND CALLS FOR CONTINUING FREE DEBATE
ON PARTY'S FUNCTIONS AND FURTHER UNITY AS PREPARATION
FOR NEXT PARTY CONGRESS.

3. BOTH SKP CHAIRMAN SAARINEN AND MINORITY WING LEADER

SINISALO APPEARED IN TV INTERVIEW AND, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING CONTINUING DIFFERENCES, STRESSED THAT CENTRAL COMMITTEE SEES BOTH FACTIONS MOVING TOGETHER. SIMILARLY, MODERATE COMMUNIST KANSAN UUTISEN EDITORIALIZED THAT AFTER MORE THAN DECADE OF INTERNAL STRIFE ONE CANNOT EXPECT SUDDEN CHANGE BUT THAT STRENGTHENING OF PARTY UNITY IS CONTINUING.

4. IN RELATED MOVE, SAARINEN PUBLICLY REJECTED IDEA OF SPECIAL MULTI-PARTY CITIZENS COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT RE-ELECTION OF PRESIDENT, APPARENTLY THUS APPEASING SINISALO WHO HAD OPPOSED SUCH A COMMISSION IN WHICH SKP WOULD HAVE SAT WITH CONSERVATIVES. SKP STILL, OF COURSE, SUPPORTS KEKKONEN RE-ELECTION.

5. IN SEPARATE POLITICAL ACTION DOCUMENT, ALSO APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY, SKP CENTRAL COMMITTEE EXAMINED ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SITUATION IN FINLAND AND ROLES OF POLITICAL PARTIES. IT CONDEMNED CENTER-RIGHT COLLABORATION ON 1977 BUDGET, WHICH IT SAW DICTATED BY INTERESTS OF BIG ENTERPRISES AND WEALTHIEST SECTOR OF POPULATION. SKP APPEALS IN DOCUMENT TO CENTER FORCES -- CENTER, LIBERAL, AND SWEDISH PARTIES -- TO SHIFT COOPERATION FROM RIGHT TO LEFT.

6. HOWEVER, DOCUMENT MAKES SPECIAL APPEAL TO SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDP) THAT COOPERATION BETWEEN THE LABOR PARTIES IS KEY TO STOPPING THE RIGHTIST TREND, AND CAUTIONS AGAINST RETURN TO GOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION.

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TION BETWEEN SKP AND CENTER PARTIES. APPARENT IMPLICATION IS THAT CENTER/LEFT COOPERATION (PARA 5) MUST ALSO INCLUDE COMMUNISTS, NOT JUST SDP. DOCUMENT ALSO "EMPHASIZES AGAIN THAT OUR COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS CANNOT BE SOLVED WITHOUT INTERFERING WITH ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL POWER POSITIONS OF BIG ENTERPRISES AND BIG BANKS."

7. DOCUMENT ALSO ATTACKS CENTRIST POLITICAL GROUPS FOR RIGHTWING TREND, AND CHARGES THAT THEIR COOPERATION WITH THE RIGHT "IS A THREAT TO OUR COUNTRY'S PEACE-LOVING FOREIGN POLICY, NEIGHBORHOOD FRIENDSHIP AND FINLAND'S STABLE INTERNATIONAL POSITION."

8. SKP STATEMENTS SEIZED UPON BY LEADING HELSINGIN SANOMAT IN EDITORIAL WHICH GRANTED THAT CENTRAL COMMITTEE REINFORCED IMPRESSION OF INTERNAL DETENTE IN SKP BUT CONTENDED THAT DETENTE IS ON TERMS OF HARDLINE WING. PAPER CONTRASTED SKP BEHAVIOR WITH

PRESIDENT KEKKONEN'S STATEMENT TEN YEARS AGO ABOUT "GEARING OUR COMMUNISTS AS FULL CITIZENS OF FINNISH SOCIETY" AND CONCLUDED THAT COMMUNISTS RESUSE TO BE GEARED. IT NOTED THAT KEKKONEN HAD ASKED "HAVEN'T THE COMMUNISTS BROUGHT OUR COUNTRY A NEW NATIONAL SPIRIT AND VIGOR AND RENEWED CONFIDENCE IN TOMORROW?" AND CONCLUDED THAT TIME FOR SUCH RHETORICAL QUESTIONS IS OVER.

9. OTHER PRESS PLAYED DOWN SKP MEETING. INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE UUSI SUOMI SAID DECISIONS SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN UNNECESSARILY GREAT SIGNIFICANCE AS UNANIMITY OCCURRED IN PREDICTABLE AREAS ONLY. SKP PAPER ACCUSED SKP OF CONTINUING CONFUSION OVER PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS; SAYING SAARINEN'S VACILLATION ONLY ADDS TO CONFUSION. END UNCLASSIFIED
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10. FURTHER INFORMATION CONCERNING SKP CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING MAY REVEAL WHETHER PARTY HARMONY DID IN FACT PREVAIL AT MEETING OR WHETHER SAARINEN AND SINISALO ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF "CONTINUING DIFFERENCES" HINTS AT BASIC INTERNAL DISAGREEMENTS. THERE CLEARLY IS A BASIC CONTRADICTION BETWEEN SKP CALL FOR CENTER/LEFT COOPERATION AND SKP'S OWN MORE RADICAL APPROACH TO FINNISH PROBLEMS AS INDICATED BY LAST NOVEMBER'S ACTION PROGRAM AND POLICY STATEMENT PRODUCED BY MEETING JUST CONCLUDED; HARDLINE NEW SKP APPROACH HARDLY FORMS BASIS FOR JOINT PROGRAM WITH SDP OR CENTER GROUPS. ALSO, SKP'S CHARGE THAT COOPERATION WITH RIGHT IS THREAT TO FINNISH FOREIGN POLICY, AND APPARENT REJECTION OF ANY LEGITIMATE POLITICAL ROLE FOR CONSERVATIVE GROUPS HARDLY CONSISTENT WITH PAST HOPES THAT SKP CAPABLE OF PLAYING NORMAL POLITICAL ROLE IN FINNISH POLITICAL LIFE.
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